

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-11, 15, 17 and 19-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,479,618 ("Van de Steeg"). Independent Claims 1, 8, 19, 21 and 24 have been amended to recite that the process module or the basis controller of the processing station comprises the program control unit which is adapted to execute the desired program. In turn, the program data administrator unit contains process module specific data which comprises data indicating the location of the program and data indicating whether the program is to be executed in the program control unit of either the process module or the basis controller of the processing station.

These additional features emphasize the salient feature of the present invention, that the process module and/or the processing station is/are automatically programmed when the process module is installed in the processing station.

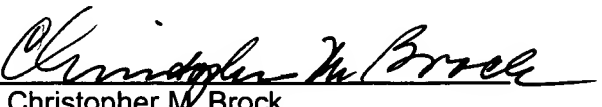
The cited Van de Steeg '618 patent does not disclose such a feature. It merely teaches that the I/O module contains program data which are transmitted to a predetermined processor. It is not disclosed that the program data may be transferred and executed either in the I/O Module 15 itself or in the superordinated PC system 11. It is clearly indicated in this document that the program instructions stored in the PROM 25 are transmitted to the programmable logic circuit 29 and then to the second programmable logic circuit 37 which are both devices of the I/O Module 15.

This distinction of the present invention over the Van de Steeg reference has also been acknowledged by the German Patent Office. New Claim 25 is an English language translation of allowed Claim 1 from the corresponding German priority application.

Accordingly, Claims 1-25 are believed to patentably distinguish the present invention over the cited art of record. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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